



PA's Amphibian and Reptile Coloring Series

Seal Salamander



All About Me: Hi! I am a Seal Salamander. I am a member of the lungless salamander family. We have no lungs and thus need to take in oxygen through our thin, moist skin. We average 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ " to five inches long as an adult. We have a robust body like our cousins, the northern dusky salamanders. Our tail makes up approximately one-half the length of our body. Our tail is compressed, and the tip is knife-edged on the upper side and pointed. We are often light brown or grayish above with dark-brown or black wavy streaks or reticulations that stand out. Sometimes these markings take on the appearance of worm-like blotches and may be surrounded by paler areas. Our belly is light and plain, although some of us may have blotches on the underside. Our sides are dark above but lighter and speckled as they approach the belly line. We have 14 costal grooves (skin folds) on each side. In Pennsylvania, we reside in the southwestern part of the state, west of the Allegheny Mountains. Our range does not reach the Ohio border, and Clarion County just about marks our northern limits. We are an animal of hilly regions. We like to stay close to water where we dive in if disturbed. Otherwise, we hide under rocks, logs or in burrows from where we feed. Our hiding place almost always is on the bank of a mountain stream or small, rocky brook. A boggy ravine, rock-strewn and well-shaded from the sun by a hardwood forest are an ideal home for us. Unmoving as we sit in front of our burrow, we quickly leap out and grab unsuspecting insects as they walk by. We eat ants, beetles and even other salamanders.